

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 are active in the present application. Claims 3-8 and 10 have been amended to remove multiple dependencies. No new matter is added. An action on the merits and allowance of claims is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows.

--3. (Amended) The citrullinated polypeptide as claimed in [either of claims 1 and 2, characterized in that] claim 1, wherein said vertebrate fibrin is a mammalian fibrin, preferably a human fibrin.

4. (Amended) The use of a polypeptide as claimed in [any one of claims 1 to 3] claim 1, for diagnosing rheumatoid arthritis, *in vitro*.

5. (Amended) An antigenic composition for diagnosing the presence of rheumatoid arthritis-specific autoantibodies in a biological sample, characterized in that it contains at least one citrullinated polypeptide as claimed in [any one of claims 1 to 3] claim 1, optionally labeled with and/or conjugated to a carrier molecule.

6. (Amended) A method for detecting rheumatoid arthritis specific autoantibodies in a biological sample, which method is characterized in that it comprises:

bringing said biological sample into contact with at least one polypeptide as claimed in [any one of claims 1 to 3] claim 1, under conditions which allow the formation of an antigen/antibody complex with the rheumatoid arthritis-specific autoantibodies possibly present;

detecting, by any suitable means, the antigen/antibody complex possibly formed.

7. (Amended) A kit for detecting rheumatoid arthritis-specific autoantibodies in a biological sample, characterized in that it comprises at least one polypeptide as claimed in [any one of claims 1 to 3] claim 1, and also buffers and reagents suitable for constituting a reaction medium which allows the formation of an antigen/antibody complex, and/or means for detecting said antigen/antibody complex.

8. (Amended) The use of a citrullinated polypeptide as claimed in [any one of claims 1 to 3] claim 1, for producing a medicinal product.

10. (Amended) A pharmaceutical composition, characterized in that it contains, as active principle, at least one citrullinated polypeptide as claimed in [any one of claims 1 to 3] claim 1--

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